

ACADEMIC BOARD CHARTER

1. Authority

The Academic Board (AB) of Academies Australasia Polytechnic (AAPoly) is established by the AAPoly Board of Directors (BOD) as part of its discharge of responsibilities to ensure effective oversight and management of academic governance requirements as specified by the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2015, current legislation and best practice in higher education (HE) provision. This Charter was authorised by the BOD on 5 July 2017.

2. Definitions and abbreviations

<i>AAPoly</i>	<i>Academies Australasia Polytechnic</i>
<i>AB</i>	<i>Academic Board</i>
<i>ASQA</i>	<i>Australian Standards and Quality Authority</i>
<i>BOD</i>	<i>Board of Directors</i>
<i>HCC</i>	<i>Higher Education Courses Committee (standing committee of AB)</i>
<i>HE</i>	<i>Higher Education</i>
<i>HESF</i>	<i>Higher Education Standards Framework</i>
<i>HQC</i>	<i>Higher Education Quality Committee (standing committee of AB)</i>
<i>TEQSA</i>	<i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Authority</i>
<i>VET</i>	<i>Vocational Education and Training</i>
<i>External member</i>	<i>a person not currently employed by AAPoly</i>
<i>Standing Committee</i>	<i>a permanent organisational group established by the AB</i>
<i>Working Group</i>	<i>a temporary organisational group established by the AB</i>
<i>Portfolio Holder</i>	<i>an individual with organisational responsibility for specific tasks</i>

3. Purpose of the Academic Board

The AB is responsible for the academic governance aspects of all HE academic programs and courses of study, all relevant policies and procedures, academic professional development and scholarly activities, academic quality assurance and benchmarking, and academic risk management at AAPoly, aiming to ensure consistently high quality program delivery, teaching, learning and scholarship.

Broadly, the AB has seven main functions which are to:

1. oversee academic integrity and the pursuit of free intellectual enquiry;
2. oversee the development and review of existing and new HE courses and programs;
3. be responsible for the maintenance of the quality of teaching and learning;
4. recommend to the BOD, the granting of awards to qualified HE students;
5. be responsible for the development, application and review of academic policies and procedures;
6. be responsible for the formulation, implementation and review of academic and educational plans; and
7. minimise, mitigate and manage academic risk.

4. Activities of the Academic Board

The AB discharges its academic governance responsibilities through activities which include, but are not limited to:

- encouraging scholarly debate, academic integrity and professional scholarship on matters relevant to AAPoly's academic activities;
- ensuring only fully qualified candidates are recommended for the HE awards, and be responsible for the terms and granting of other awards, scholarships and forms of recognition for academic progression and achievements;
- development, monitoring and review of AAPoly academic policies and procedures to ensure they are consistent with best practice, and they are compliant with regulatory standards, including the current HESF, and relevant legislation;
- provide guidance, consistent with the AAPoly strategic plan, to the AAPoly educational enterprise through the development, application and review of teaching and learning, benchmarking, academic inquiry and academic quality assurance plans; and
- report and provide advice to the BOD on academic strategy and risk management in academic matters.

5. Reporting, subcommittees, relationships and student involvement

The AB reports on its activities to the BOD.

The AB Chair will determine the reports the AB requires and this will be reflected in the AB minutes and agenda.

The AB Chair may generate standing committees, subcommittees, working groups and teams and make use of individual portfolio holders at AAPoly to discharge its responsibilities.

Standing Committees will be officially established through a resolution of the AB and its Terms of Reference attached as an Appendix to this Charter.

Subcommittees, working groups, teams of individual portfolio holders tasked to assist the AB require Terms of Reference to guide their activities. A template for TORs is found at Appendix G of the AAPoly Academic Governance Framework.

The AB may also co-opt persons with relevant expertise whose input will assist the AB in its work, subject to budgetary approval by the BOD.

The AB works closely with the BOD and CEO of AAPoly to ensure all its activities are adequately resourced to enable it to fulfil its duties and obligations as a significant part of the AAPoly academic governance system.

The AB will provide the opportunity for student involvement in academic governance through an Alumni position on the AB as well as ensuring that where possible all standing committees subcommittees, working groups and teams include formal student input.

Any member of the BOD may attend any meeting of the AB or its Standing Committees, subcommittee, working groups or teams.

6. Membership, appointment and terms

6.1 Membership

The size and composition of the AB is intended to facilitate effective governance of academic processes and the future strategic development of the educational activities of AAPoly. Members of the AB are voting members unless otherwise indicated. The AB membership is described in the following points.

- The AB will normally have members comprised as follows:
 - Chairs of each of the AB Standing Committees (ex officio) (see Schedule 1 of this Charter for current Standing Committees)
 - Academic Dean (ex officio)
 - At least three persons, external to AAPoly
 - A representative of the Alumni
 - A representative of the HE teaching staff
 - A nominee of the BOD (non-voting)
- The BOD will appoint the Chair and Deputy Chair of the AB from the membership. The Chair and Deputy Chair will be selected from the external members other than the alumni member.

6.2 Appointment and terms

External members and the nominee of the BOD are appointed, reappointed and removed by the AAPoly BOD. Appointments are normally for a period of two (2) years. Appointees serving effectively are eligible for re-appointment by the BOD for a maximum of five (5) consecutive terms.

The alumni representative is appointed by the AB normally for a period of two (2) years, and after effective service, may be reappointed for one further term.

The teaching staff representative is appointed by the AB normally for a period of two (2) years, and after effective service, may be reappointed for one further term.

The Chair and Deputy Chair are appointed by the BOD normally for a period of two (2) years and if serving effectively are eligible for re-appointment by the BOD for a maximum of five (5) consecutive terms.

6.3 When membership ceases

A person ceases to be a member of the AB if that person at any time during their term of office:

- resigns from the AB;
- no longer holds the relevant position that entitles the person to be on the AB;
- in the case of a person occupying a specific role, when the person ceases to occupy that role;
- is absent from three consecutive meetings of the AB, and has not been given leave by the Chair;
- is removed from office; or
- the member dies.

The Chair or Deputy Chair may be removed from office by the BOD, and appointments made by the AB may be removed from office by the AB, by the process detailed in Appendix H of the Academic Governance Framework.

6.4 Profile of Academic Board Members

The AB is a combination of a representative and a skills/attributes based board and the BOD has determined that membership of the AB should include members who collectively possess the academic, discipline-based expertise and professional knowledge required in relation to HE. The principle guiding all appointments is whether the person can contribute to the effective and efficient work of the AB in the discharge of its duties and obligations.

It is a general expectation that all persons, regardless of their position, involved in academic governance do so with independence of thought and with the best outcome for AAPoly in mind. Conflicts of interest that may interfere with this capacity are called for at every meeting.

6.4.1 General members

The enabling attributes and skills categories, that all internal and external appointees to and ex officio members, of the AB collectively bring to deliberations and the exercise of responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- A mix of current specialist, discipline-based knowledge and general academic expertise.
- Substantive familiarity with education, teaching and learning at a senior level.
- Familiarity with the operation, opportunities and risks of the local and global graduate employment market.
- Well established networks in HE and relevant employment sectors
- Knowledge and understanding of current and future trends in the HE sector.
- Substantive experience with risk management, decision making, governance and compliance at a senior level, preferably Board level.
- Knowledge of employer expectations and the relevant employment market opportunities for AAPoly graduates.
- Professional contacts with a relevant network of individuals and organisations.

6.4.2 Chair of the AB

The Chair of the AB will be a person external to AAPoly, and the following attributes and skills are desirable and should guide the choice of a suitable chairperson:

- Experience in leadership on or chairing of governance boards or committees
- Well-developed communication, analytical and decision-making skills
- An ability to contribute to at least three of the categories of qualities and skills in the list in 6.4.1 above.

6.4.3 Deputy Chair of the AB

Given the demands of the role, the Deputy Chair will have similar attributes to the Chair as detailed in 6.4.2.

6.5 Member duties and functions

The roles of all members of the AB require them to engage in the work of the AB with a focus on the best academic performance possible for the benefit of students and staff of AAPoly. In carrying out this work the Chair, Deputy Chair and Secretary of the AB have particular responsibilities.

6.5.1 The Chair of the AB:

- chairs all meetings of the AB;
- Is responsible for managing and supervising the work of the AB;
- Is responsible for reporting on AB activities to the BOD; and
- Is subject to any delegations of authority given by the BOD and the AB.

6.5.2 The Deputy Chair of the AB:

- is responsible for carrying out the duties expected of the Chair in the absence of the Chair;
- supports the role of the Chair as delegated by the Chair; and
- Is subject to any delegations of authority given by the BOD and the AB.

6.5.3 A Secretary of the AB will be appointed by the CEO, and will:

- provide administrative support and resources to the AB;
- support the role of the Chair and Deputy Chair as delegated by the Chair and Deputy Chair; and
- have specific secretarial functions related to AB meetings (see Section 7.3 here, and Schedule 2 of this Charter).

7. Meetings

7.1 Ordinary meetings

Ordinary meetings are those held on a regular basis, usually scheduled in advance on the annual Academic Board Calendar and have a standard agenda which reflects the work program for the AB for the year. Ordinary meetings normally follow these principles.

1. The AB will meet at least four (4) times a year.

2. The quorum for meetings of the AB is 50% of the members (if the full membership is an even number), or the membership divided by 2, and add 1 (if the membership is an odd number), but it is essential that there is at least one external, and one internal member present.
3. The Chair, or in their absence, the Deputy Chair, or in the case of both these members being unavailable, the Academic Dean will convene all meetings.
4. Dates of the meetings of the Academic Board and its Standing Committees and established Working Groups will be published (in print and electronically) in the annual Academic Board Calendar which will normally be finalised at the first meeting of the calendar year.
5. Meetings are normally held in person but may be facilitated by communications technology to enable attendance.

7.2 Special meetings

The Chair may at any time convene a special meeting of the AB. The BOD can also request a special meeting which will not normally be refused. A special meeting will also be arranged if a majority of members indicate in writing a request for a special meeting.

7.3 Procedures of meetings

These are general procedural aspects of ordinary meetings of the AB. For further information about the role of Secretary of the AB, see Schedule 2 of this Charter.

1. Notice of meeting will normally be given at least fourteen (14) working days in advance of the meeting specifying the date, time, venue and agenda of the business to be transacted at that meeting.
2. The Chair and the AB may inform itself in any way it finds effective and efficient for its work, including requesting reports from AAPoly operational individuals, working groups or other teams.
3. The Chair and AB determine standing items on the AB agenda.
4. The only routine reports to the AB are those of AB Standing Committees and AB working groups or teams, as specified in their terms of reference, while other reports on the AB agenda are by specific request by the Chair and AB on matters required by the AB for its deliberations.
5. Motions require a proposer and seconder unless introduced by the Chair or Deputy Chair.
6. Decisions will be the outcome of debate and collaborative intent.
7. When a vote is required it will be based on a simple majority.
8. No vote may be taken at a meeting which does not have a quorum.
9. The Chair will have a deliberative and casting vote.
10. Decisions will be formally recorded in the minutes.
11. Any member may request a decision be deferred to allow them to seek more information on the matter being decided.
12. Members may abstain from voting or discussing a decision for reason of conscience or conflict of interest.
13. The AB Secretary will normally take the minutes of AB.
14. Minutes of meetings must be kept in a secure and accessible place and will be maintained by the Secretary to the AB.

15. In appropriate circumstances the AB may delegate its powers to the Chair and these decisions will be ratified at the next meeting. This will usually only occur if a decision is urgent and required outside the regular meeting cycle, and convening a special meeting is impractical.

VERSION CONTROL

Date	Details	Author	Version
02012014	Name change from AAPoly to Academies Australasia Polytechnic Change in organisation structure	ET	1.0
02022016	Review of the entire document for clarity and operability	TM	2.0
02022016	Edited by Peter Ryan (external consultant) for TEQSA submission	Peter Ryan/ET	2.1
04022016	Approved by the BOD	ET	2.1
26072017	Recommended changes after External Review by Dr Peter Ryan and approved by the Board of Directors	ET	3.0
27072017	Detailed edit for usability. Addition of Schedule 1 and 2	TM	3.1
01082017	Update editing	TM	3.2
10082017	Update editing, harmonising, appendices	TM	3.3
12082017	Editing	ET	3.4
23082017	Editing	TM	3.5
06082017	Update after BOD review	TM	3.6

SCHEDULE 1

Standing Committees of the AAPoly Academic Board

As a result of internal and external reviews of academic governance at AAPoly during the first half of 2017, the establishment of two standing committees, for which there are separate Terms of Reference included with this schedule, was approved at the Academic Board meeting of 18 August 2017.

The two standing committees are:

Higher Education Courses Committee

Higher Education Quality Committee

SCHEDULE 2

Duties of the AB Secretary

The duties of the Secretary are vital to the efficient and effective functioning of the AB in the discharge of its role in academic governance. This schedule aims to provide guidance for the work required of the Secretary. In all cases it is expected that if the appointed AB Secretary is absent from duties that a deputy is made available.

The AB Secretary can be expected to:

1. be present at all meetings of the AB;
2. take the minutes of all meetings of the AB;
3. aim to finalise a draft of those minutes within ten business days after the AB meeting for review by the Chair of the AB;
4. create a draft agenda of the upcoming AB meeting one month prior to the upcoming meeting;
5. maintain an “outstanding items” register in a format suitable for the AB, and ensure responsible persons nominated within that register are notified of AB expectations within five business days of the AB meeting;
6. liaise with the “policy registrar” of AAPoly, a month prior to each AB meeting, to check which policies are scheduled for review and which policies are newly finalised, and advise the Chair of the AB for follow up action;
7. send out all notices of meetings and reminders and individual requests for reports on behalf of the AB Chair;
8. ensure a suitable meeting room and facilities are prepared for AB meetings, including technology to enable attendance from a remote location if requested;
9. maintain a correspondence file for the AB;
10. maintain a template document file for the AB;
11. maintain a register of agendas and minutes of the AB;
12. maintain a register of resolutions of the AB;
13. maintain a register of all reports to the AB and from the AB;
14. receive and assist with all inquiries regarding the AB;
15. assist the Chair of the AB as required.

VERSION CONTROL Schedule 2 AB Charter

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28072017	Creation	TM – Chair AB	1.0
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